who own and run the machines at so much a bushel of oats threshed,—and I discovered that while they make more money than the ordinary farmer, they all die off in a few years, unless they are wise enough to sell out before it is too late. But apart from these highly practical results of steam farming, it was the ugliness of it which impressed me. Ugh! The memory of it has half spoiled the barn. It is as if we had called the devil from Sheol to do our work, and had somehow sold our souls in the bargain. From the bottom of my soul I hate machinery!

Think of the crimes of machinery! It has made the world ugly, and it has robbed work of all pleasure. Is that not indictment enough? I was coming into Schenectady on the train the other day at sundown, and the hideousness of it all burst upon me like a revelation,—whole blackened acres of railway tracks,—ashes and soot and smoke,—grimy engine houses,—and forbidding groups of factories alongside. How can hell surpass such a background? And then the joylessness of the work. Here again it is hell. Can anyone enjoy factory life? The factory is simply a penal institution; it means so many hours a day of “hard labor,” and it means also the atrophy of men’s brains and the loss of all interest in a man’s life-work. Men may indeed work voluntarily in factories for the sake of gain, but it is perhaps sadder that they should do it of their own volition than against their wills. To learn to love hell would be the last surrender to eternal death.

In the niche on the staircase landing a tall Jokonabi vase holds the brilliant yellow flowers in rich abundance, and, at the foot of the stairs, there are more of them in a Rookwood bowl. In big stoneware crocks for the fireplaces, in ginger-jars, blue-and-white jugs, dark green and rich brown pots, and in a copper-lustre pitcher—a treasured heirloom—we store our marigold riches. A golden bowl would be none too fine for our use, yet a homely brown jar sets off admirably the splendor of the flowers.

IN MARIGOLD TIME.  BY ALICE M. RATHBONE

MARY’S plant,” with its golden bloom, yields a glorious harvest. In garden values it is worth its weight in the most precious of metals, when, in the days of early autumn, we begin to house a shining crop, carrying it in by the armful. All the largest flower-holders are pressed into service to receive its wealth of bloom. Then, our simple rooms take on a look of opulence.
IN MARIGOLD TIME

Something in the nature of an aesthetic miracle was wrought last year in our living-room, when that unsightly contrivance for comfort, a steam radiator, was redeemed from ugliness while the marigolds lasted. That by any means whatever this unsightly necessity might become an adjunct of beauty seemed impossible, until, one day, debating where to place a jardinière filled with velvet-browns and orange, lemon, pure and tawny yellows, we tried it on the radiator, when it was at once transformed into a dull gold support for the mass of harmonizing color above it.

More than a thousand seedlings went to the making of our plantation, which is hedged about with that excellent dwarf marigold, called the “Legion of Honor.” This variety is desirable not only in the garden, but in the arrangement of cut marigolds, branches of its dark green foliage are indispensable for screening the long stems of the large-flowered Africans; while its own pretty blossoms add to the display of gold.

Our discriminating neighbors receive sheaves of marigolds, from time to time, during the golden harvest, although we have made such gifts cautiously since the occurrence of a crushing incident which happened long ago. On the occasion of a harvest festival, the villagers were asked to bring tributes of fruit and flowers to adorn the church, and for my personal offering I chose a mass of marigolds, which, as I believed, caused one window to glow with something of the richness of stained glass. Beneath it, when adorned, a most estimable soul and I happened to meet. “Who could have brought such smelling things as marigolds?” said she. By this exclamation I was pained, much as one who hears a well-loved friend criticised. I was impressed by the strength of flower prejudices, as well as by the particular need of discretion in dispensing marigolds.

The unusual splendor of our last year’s display must be partly attributed to the coal strike, of which one beneficent result may be thus chronicled: namely, a supply of wood ashes sufficient to cover the entire garden. Probably it never occurred to one of the old alchemists that ashes could be transmuted into gold. But in Nature’s crucible this is easily done, as she now proves in these golden blooms, which, once mere pot-herbs in the kitchen garden, now hold a favored place among the flowers.